AN
ESSAY
ON THE
FUTURE LIFE
OF
BRUTES,

Introduced with

Obſervations upon EVIL,

Its NATURE, and ORIGIN.

By RICHARD DEAN,

CURATE of MIDDLETON.

VOL. I.

MANCHESTER:

Printed by *J. Harrop*, oppoſite the *Exchange*.

MDCCLXVII.

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THE

THE

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

ESSAY

ON THE

Future Life of BRUTES.

WE propoſe here to enquire into the Nature and Origin of Evil. The Subject indeed has been much beaten and exhauſted, but we hope to be able, notwithſtanding, to offer ſomething upon it, which may be

uſeful to thoſe who ſhall give themſelves the Trouble to peruſe our Speculations.

Evil is a Term of large Extenſion, and includes a great Variety of Ideas, as we ſhall preſently undertake to ſhew; in the mean Time we ſhall inform the Reader, why an Eſſay on the future Life of Brutes is introduced, with Obſervations on the Nature and Origin of Evil.

For this purpoſe he is deſired to reflect that dumb Animals are liable to Infelicity as well as Men: that

that they have their pains and ſickneſſes, ſuffer many Sorrows from internal Diſorders, and many pangs from external Injuries, and finally languiſh, decay, and die as he himſelf does; and theſe are Conſiderations preſumed ſufficient to juſtify the Obſervations in Queſtion.

But, beſides all this, when we carry our Thoughts forward to that other ſtate of Creatures to come, take a View of its ſuperior Privileges, and infinitely more exalted good, an Enquiry why the preſent, which is under the Inſpection and Government of the

ſame Being, for ever conſiſtent with himſelf, ſhould be attended with Diſadvantages ſo prodigious, appears not only to be natural, but greatly intereſting. It is for this Reaſon chiefly, that the Eſſay on the future Life of Brutes is introduced, with Obſervations on Evil, and it was no Argument with the Author to ſpare them, that the Point had been handled a thouſand Times.

In the Management of this Subject, we ſhall endeavour to purſue ſuch a Method, as we think is likely to carry Clearneſs and Preci-

Preciſion along with it; we ſhall be careful to define with Accuracy, and range the Arguments we form upon it, in ſuch a Manner, and give them ſuch Illuſtrations, as we flatter ourſelves will render them intelligible and convincing. If we ſhould happen to fail in any of thoſe Particulars, we fly immediately for Refuge to the general Plea of Sinners, *humanum eſt errare.*

We begin with a Definition of Evil. Evil, as before mentioned, is a Term of large Extention, for taken in its utmoſt Latitude, it includes all the Wants, Imperfec-

tions, and Miſeries of Beings, their Ignorance, Imbecility, Pain, Poverty, Grief, Diſcontent, Sickneſs, and the like; it extends itſelf alſo to all the Slips, Deviations, and Errors of moral Beings, but as moral Evil is not the Object of our preſent Enquiries, we ſhall offer no Thought about it, but proceed to conſider that Species of Evil called natural, and which is incident to every Creatur endued with Life, and Senſibility. We ſhew what is particularly meant by natural Evil, and then Endeavour to account for its Entrance into this World.

Natural

Natural Evil is an Expreſſion made uſe of to ſignify thoſe Sufferings of Creatures, to which we give the Names of Pain, Sickneſs, Infirmity, Want, Diſeaſe, and Death, and the Reaſon why we call them natural is, becauſe we find that Men, and other living Creatures of this World, are by their Natures inevitably and univerſally ſubject to them.

Some Philoſophers have taught us to define natural Evil in this Manner. The Idea of Matter they ſay includes the Idea of Imperfection, and where there is

Imperfection there muſt be Evil. Now ſince the Bodies of Men and other Animals are certain Parcels of Matter variouſly formed and modified, Men and other Animals muſt therefore be liable to its Imperfections, and conſequently to its Evils. Thus are Pain, Sickneſs, Want, Infirmity, and the like, under which our Bodies frequently labour, called natural Evils, becauſe they are the natural Effects of certain Imperfections eſſential to Matter, and inſeperable from it. We ſhall enquire, by and by, into the Truth of this Doctrine, and of ſome

others

others beſides, concerning the origin of natural Evil. In the mean Time, we beg leave to take a ſlight Survey of the Condition of Beings, ſubject to the Strokes of natural Evil.

And for this Purpoſe all Stations of Obſervation are alike, we are every Moment in the Throng of Miſery, and the Circle of unhappineſs, and what way ſoever we turn ourſelves, there are Sights to terrify our Confidences, and ſcare our Reſolutions. The ſad Scene diſcloſes itſelf in every Point of View, and opens upon us from all

all Quarters of the World, and one Glance is ſufficient to agitate the whole Frame of the Soul, to call up Sorrow, awake Fear, and inſpire Melancholy. The Old and the Young, the Rich and the Poor, the Vigorous and the Feeble indiſcriminately ſuffer, the innocent are attacked with the guilty, and Evils are the Portion of him that feareth God, as well as him that feareth him not. The World is full of Hoſpitals wherein wretchedneſs exhibits itſelf in all Forms, and all Images. Our Doors are every Day crouded with Objects, fainting under the

Pangs

Pangs of Hunger and Thirſt, naked and ſhivering, deprived of the Uſe of their Limbs, and the Sight of the Sun, and telling the ſad Tales of their preſent Miſeries and paſt Misfortunes, to excite Compaſſion, and obtain Charity. And laſtly, Death preſents himſelf inceſſantly in all hideous Varieties of Agony, and convulſive Horror. Here natural Evil employs its utmoſt Force, and there is need of ſomething more than natural Courage, to be able to face it without Deſpair.

Of that prodigious Deluge of Woes

Woes which covers the Earth, much of it iſſues from unſuſpected Sources and inviſible Cauſes. Human Comfort lies at the Mercy of of many Accidents, and many Chances; we may ſuffer from the Fall of a Stone, from the Stench of a Vapour, from the burſting of a Cloud, a ſilly Blaſt of Wind has the Power to annoy, and a Puff of Smoke to diſturb us; an inſignificant Fly is able to give us Torment, and a Hair, or a Grape-ſtone to put an End to our Lives. We are ſometimes injured by Friends without Deſign, and perpetually by the Craft of Hypocrites,

crites, and the premeditated Malice of Knaves and Villains. In ſhort, if we reflect upon the many ways which we are open to Pain and Death, we ſhall be aſtoniſhed how we come to live a Day to an End, and enjoy a ſingle Moment of Eaſe.

The natural Evils of Life are greatly aggravated by the Mind's particular Manner of thinking about them, by the Force of its Conceits and Imaginations. It frequently diſturbs itſelf with Reviews of Diſaſters long ſince paſt, and often with Apprehenſions of Evils

Evils ſometime to come, and thus by an imprudent uſe of its own Powers, throws into the Account of the preſent Moment, the Pains and Sorrows of an Age. It toils and labours under theſe Reflections, till what perhaps was only imaginary at firſt, becomes in the End a real Miſchief, and an actual Evil, till the Body trembles under the Mind's Fancy, and the Mind itſelf loſes its Fortitude and turns Coward.

We enter often into the Infelicities of other Men, ſhare their Anxieties, and take a Part in their Burdens;

Burdens; we weep at a Sight of their Tears, and groan at the Sound of their Mournings, This indeed is a Principle of Nature, and a commendable Paſſion, tho' it is certainly a Source of ſome Degree of Evil, and cannot exiſt in a better State.

And laſtly, the Mind is extremely dextrous at magnifying its own Miſeries; whatever we ſuffer, it is fancied to be more and greater than what others in the like Caſes and Circumſtances ſuffer; we count every tardy Moment of Pain, make every Moment

ment of it a Day, and every Day a Year.

And yet for all this, and much more which might be added, Life may be made tolerable, and our Paſſage through it ſmoother and eaſier than Imagination generally repreſents the Matter. Amidſt all the Calamities which ſurround us, the Miſeries which aſſault, and the Deaths that threaten us, there is one friendly Thought at Hand; a Thought which ſteps in betwixt us and theſe tremendous Adverſaries, and diſarms them of all their Stings, and Terrors. This is

the

the Thought of a future and a better World; a World where all Pain is excluded, and all Tears for ever wiped away. If the Soul would wrap itſelf up in the Views and Contemplations of an adequate and laſting Glory there, it would become fortified on this noble Argument, bravely Adventure on the Sufferings of this World, and count them as nothing, in Compariſon of its expected Happineſs in the next.

If Brute Animals do not multiply their Sorrows by Reflexion upon what is paſt, and Fear of

what is to come; a Point this perhaps, not quite ſo clear as to exclude all Doubts and Exceptions; it is however very certain, that they are liable to momentary Sufferings, and tranſient Evils, they have their dark Hours of Pain and Sickneſs, and die under the ſad Appearances of Agony, like the Beings that are above them.

However they may differ from them in ſome Particulars reſpecting the Powers of Underſtanding and Reaſon, there is a pretty near Reſemblance betwixt them as to two Caſes, they feel alike, and die alike.

alike. And yet for all this, we ſay that Brutes have no Share in Futurity; it is an eaſy Thing to ſay ſo, but not ſo eaſy to anſwer for what follows thereon; they ſuffer much at preſent, and if this is all, we muſt then conclude that they were produced in an evil Hour and a fatal Moment; I know not whether we ſhall not be obliged to go further, and impeach the divine Goodneſs; for it appears as if the Principle of Senſibility, in a World where Evils predominate, was a huge Misfortune, and an ungracious Gift, provided that the Creatures endued with it, have

no Intereſt in the Benefits of a better. But of this more hereafter.

We propoſe to enquire after the Origin of theſe Evils, which are common to all living Beings. Our chief Aim herein will be to ſhew, that Pain and Death are foreign Accidents, neither decreed as inevitable, nor neceſſary from the Nature of the Subjects in which they are found, but exiſting Caſually, or after the Manner of Contingencies; and, if this can be done, it will be a proper Introduction to the following Eſſay, ſince it may be conſidered as an

Argument,

Argument, that endleſs Duration of Exiſtence, appears to have been a Privilege, originally deſigned for the whole Animal World.

There are four Opinions concerning the Origin of Phyſical Evil. 1ſt, That of the Manicheans, which makes it an independent Principle, and co-eval with God, or the good Principle.

2dly, That of the Schoolmen, adopted by Leibnitz the German, which ſuppoſes it neceſſary to perfect the divine Plan of Creation; or that a World conſiſting of Good and Evil, is better than a World

where there is nothing but pure Good, and unmixed Happineſs.

3dly, That of ſome Moderns, which teaches, that Matter and Evil are inſeparable, or that where Matter is concerned, there muſt be Evil.

And laſtly, the Opinion that natural Evil is an Effect of moral Evil, the impure Production of Error, and peculiar only to a wicked and corrupted World.

Now if we can make it appear that the three firſt Opinions concerning

cerning the Origin of Phyſical Evil are Groundleſs, it will follow that the laſt is the only true Opinion, that moral Evil is the Source from whence it proceeds.

As to the Manichean Notion of the Riſe of Evil, there perhaps was never any Thing conceived in all the World ſo monſtrous and inconſiſtent. But previous to our Refutation of it, we beg Leave to give a ſhort Account of the firſt Eſtabliſhment and future Progreſs of this ridiculous Doctrine.

The Notion of two firſt Prin-

ciples of all Things was the Religion of the antient Magians, profeſſed in the Eaſtern Countries amongſt the Medes and Perſians, before the Reign of Darius. Doctor Prideaux gives us in his Connexions this brief Deſcription of it. "They, the Magians (ſays he) held the Being of two firſt Cauſes, the one Light, or the good God, who was the Author of all Good; the other Darkneſs, or the evil God, who was the Author of all Evil; and that of the Mixture of theſe two, as they were in a continual Struggle with each other, all Things were made."

Zoroaſtres

Zoroaſtres afterwards reformed this Religion by bringing in a higher Principle, one ſupreme God, who created both Light and Darkneſs. The Perſians gave the Name of Oromaſdes to the good, and that of Arimanius to the evil Principle. This Opinion of the Magians concerning the good and evil Principles, was in the third Century brought out of Perſia, by one Manes, who introduced it into the Chriſtian Religion, and form'd the Sect of the Manicheans. This Sect continued a long Time, and in the ſeventh Century under one Paul, their Head, had almoſt deluged

luged the whole Roman Empire. Many Thouſands of them were maſſacred, which yet did not extinguiſh them, but in Time it came to nothing, through its own Abſurdities. It has ſince been revived by one Bayle, a Frenchman, who pretends to boaſt that he has reduced it to a rational, and conſiſtent Scheme. Such is the Hiſtory of the Doctrine of two independent Principles; we ſhall now proceed to confute it.

This indeed has been already done by many learned Men, and the Arguments they uſe on this Occaſion,

Occaſion, are briefly theſe, that the Notion of two independent Beings involves a Contradiction, and therefore it is impoſſible to be true; or if each of theſe Beings is every where equal, and oppoſite, infinite both, or every where meeting the one with the other, the one would be the Negation of, and deſtroy the other; if they differ only as Diſparates, there muſt be ſome Genius above them; if they differ at all, they are only perfect in this or that Reſpect, and this implies Imperfection in other Reſpects, and ſo at the moſt, they are but two imperfect Gods.

Further

Further to expoſe the Notion of two firſt and independent Principles of all Things, the one Good, and the other Evil, we will for once with Monſieur Bayle, and the Manicheans, allow them. Let us aſk then, how they came to agree; for an Agreement muſt be ſuppoſed, or elſe nothing had ever exiſted, ſince, as Contraries in Nature, the one would neceſſarily reſiſt all the Actions, Motions, and Deſigns of the other.

To be ſure ſays Bayle, they battled it for Ages, but at length they grew tired of their Squabbles

and

and Contentions, and came to a Parley, in order to compromiſe Matters. We beg Leave then to enter into the Converſation of the two Principles for a while, which it is natural to imagine was ſomething to this Effect.

Do you, ſays the Good Principle to the Evil one, for from this Quarter it is likely the firſt Advances towards an Agreement were made, do you ſays he, drop your Oppoſition, and ſuſpend your Rage againſt me, permit me to exert my creating Energy, to produce a World, and communicate Life and

and Happineſs to ſuch Beings as I ſhall think proper to ſupply it with; Why ſhould you thus perpetually counteract my Deſigns? I could now have beatified an Infinity of Syſtems, if your Malice and Rage had not prevented me. I know that, replies the Evil Principle, as well as you do, but Pardon me good Sir, if I am not quite ſo tame, as to give up my Rights at the Sight of nothing. I am half Lord of univerſal Space, and hang me if ever I Conſent to your forming the leaſt conceivable Individual, even an Atom of Matter, 'till Points are properly ſettled

betwixt us. Pray ſays the Good Principle, what Kind of Settlement would you have? Make your Propoſals, and declare your Terms, I aſſure you, I ſhall object to nothing that is Reaſonable.

Well then, returns the Evil Principle, ſince you are ſo compliable, I will frankly tell you how Matters ſhall be ordered. For every Saint you make, I will make a Devil; whereſoever you Bleſs a particular Country, or Spot of Ground, in any Globe that ſhall exiſt, there or in ſome other Spot of equal Dimenſions, will I ſcatter

the Curſes of Diſcord, Diſeaſe, and Barrenneſs. The Quantity of Virtue which you ſhall take upon you to introduce into any State or Community, this I will Counterbalance with an equal Proportion of Vice. And finally, as many Creatures as you ſhall think proper to call to Heaven, ſo many will I have it in my Power to ſend to Hell. On theſe Terms will I Conſent, that you exerciſe your creating Facuity, and upon no others whatſoever. Conſider of them, and let me know your Mind. Well, concludes the Good Principle, if it muſt be ſo, it muſt

be

be ſo, I am heartily tired with Diſputes, and therefore ſubſcribe to your Conditions.

So then Monſieur Bayle, the Parties are agreed, and a World of Good and Evil is produced. But are you not aſhamed to countenance ſuch a deteſtable Invention as this is? Did Homer's Gods ever hold ſuch a ſtrange Conference as your's are ſuppoſed to do? Don't you Bluſh at a Review of the Scheme of Government, you have taken ſuch Pains to vindicate; a Scheme that deſtroys the very Notion of a God, by deſtroy-

ing his Independency, a Scheme that ſhocks Reaſon, makes Subjects entertain a deſpicable, or a dreadful Opinion of the ruling Powers, and leads to the worſt Species of Infidelity. A Scheme, that if it was as true as it is falſe, would juſtify Millions, in bewailing the Times they were born, and curſing the Cauſes of their Exiſtence.

Let us next examine the Notion of Leibnitz, concerning the Origin of Phyſical Evil. In the firſt Place it is ſuppoſed, that a certain Plan was formed in the divine Underſtanding,

Underſtanding, in Purſuance of which, not only all Things that are, were made, but in Conformity to which, every Being inveſted with the Power of Activity, ſhould act. This Plan was ſuppoſed to be compared with all other poſſible Plans, and made Choice of as the beſt, and moſt excellent, and fitteſt to manifeſt the divine Perfections. Every Event therefore which happens, and every Act that is done, is, on the Foot of this Scheme, to be conſidered as Part of a mighty Series; which though fixed, and inevitable, does not affect the

Freedom of intelligent Creatures. Though Creatures of this Denomination cannot help but act in one certain determinate Manner, according to this Series, yet they are conceived to act freely.

In this Eſtabliſhment of Things, the Philoſopher includes the Events of Moral and Phyſical Evil, which he thinks are ſo far from being Diſadvantages in the Creation, that all Things conſidered, the Univerſe is more perfect with than without them.

Thus a World of Good and Evil,

vil, in the Opinion of Leibnitz, is better than a World of pure Tranquility, and unmixed Happineſs. I hope he only means the preſent World, for if the Concluſion ſtretches further, and takes in a World to come, how prodigious is the Deception of all good Men!

Leibnitz is certainly right, in affirming that the Method which God purſues in every Thing he does, is the beſt poſſible. But we cannot think it is therefore true, that all the Acts of intelligent Beings and Events which happen in the World, are ſettled

before-hand, that this was the beſt Method of conducting the Buſineſs of this complicated Syſtem of Things, and conſequently adopted by the Deity.

Infinite Perfection is intimately acquainted with all the Powers of ſecond Cauſes, and all the Thoughts and Intentions of free Beings; and can he not therefore as well be ſuppoſed to attend to the various Effects they produce, and Steps they take, as if they were ſeen as infallibly future and inevitable? Indeed we cannot help thinking it an Abſurdity to ſay,

that

that human Actions are foreſeen, ſince this is to ſuppoſe, that ſomething is, which at the ſame Time is not, to aſcribe Actions to Men before they actually exiſt, and is not the Inconſiſtency of ſuch a Notion obvious?

The divine Being has infinite Reſources in his own Power, can inſtantly apply to the moſt contingent, and leaſt probable Events, the very Moment they exiſt, and by an Addreſs peculiar to himſelf, can ſo diſpoſe, and turn them, as it ſuiteth beſt with his godly Wiſdom, and the great Ends he pur-

poſes ultimately to bring to paſs. So that though he does not foreſee the Actions of intelligent Beings, as infallibly future, yet the Schemes he has formed, and the Deſigns he has meditated in his own Wiſdom and Goodneſs, are conducted with as much Order and Propriety, as if he had predetermined every Phænomenon in Nature.

We look upon this too as a Proceeding far more worthy of Providence, than that which pins the poor Creature down to one particular, and determinate Method

thod of acting, more conſiſtent with the divine Perfections, and more agreeable to the State of intelligent Natures, who are believed to be accountable for all they do.

Indeed we cannot enter at all into the Scheme of an inevitable Series, without diſcovering its Inconſiſtencies, the Truths it contradicts and the Facts it denies; Truths and Facts, which are founded in the Reaſon, and Experience of all Mankind. In the firſt Place it has a manifeſt Tendency to produce unfavourable Opinions,

Opinions, and ill Ideas of God's Omniſcience. It diſpoſes us to think, that the Knowledge of the Deity is not extenſive enough, to take in all the Events that might happen in a World of Beings, that ſhould be left at full Liberty to do as they pleaſed; that he was not able, ſuppoſing them thus circumſtanced, to attend to all the multiplied Excurſions they ſhould make, and innumerable Curves they ſhould deſcribe, by deviating from the Path of Life and Line of Duty marked out for them.

In the next Place, it contradicts the

the whole Tenor of God's Conduct, with Reſpect to his Creatures, and repreſents it as Deluſive, Unmeaning, and an Inſult upon them. For if the Fall of Man was foreſeen, as infallibly future and inevitable, "Thou ſhalt die, and not live," was an empty Sound of Words, a vain Threat, and an uſeleſs Sanction, foreknown of God, to have no Force to bind; and therefore a Declaration unworthy of his Wiſdom and Goodneſs. And to what Purpoſe, if there is a fixed Series of Events, and Man cannot help but chuſe it, are all the Hiſtories, Examples,

amples, Warnings, and Admonitions of the Scriptures, why are we there ſo often cautioned to avoid Evil, and exhorted to purſue Truth? Why are we tempted with Rewards, and terrified with Puniſhments? It is all an inſignificant Language, deſigned only to mock and deceive us, to aggravate our Misfortunes, and render us doubly, and trebly more wretched.

And laſtly, the Scheme of an inevitable Series, denies Freedom, and conſequently denies a Fact, which is as clear as the Experience

rience of Mankind can make it. There is no Perſon who looks attentively into himſelf, who conſiders the Faculties of his own Mind, and the Grounds of his acting, that is not thoroughly convinced of his Liberty. He perceives himſelf over-ruled by no ſuperior Power, that violently determines his Will, and directs his Choice, but finds on all Occaſions, that he holds the Reins of his Inclinations in his own Hands. He is as certain of this, as he can be of any Fact in the World. It is to be obſerved indeed, that one Article of the Leibnitian Hypo-

theſis

theſis is, that we chuſe freely, tho' infallibly; but this is a miſerable Sophiſm, invented only to amuſe us, for if there is but one Way for us, and we muſt take it, this is not free, but neceſſary Choice, there can be no free Choice without an Alternative, or a Power to refuſe. Hence it is plain there can be no ſuch Thing as an inevitable Series of Events, except we are made only to be deceived and inſulted.

As by this Scheme of a predetermined Series of Events, the Origin of Evil is placed in the Decrees

Decrees of God, it was therefore incumbent upon the Author of it, to do all he could to reconcile us to a Conſtitution of Things which carried ſuch an unfavourable Countenance; accordingly, we find him boldly aſſerting the ſuperior Advantages of Evil, and not only announcing the World happy on that Score, but better, more perfect, and excellent than a World without it. He was neceſſarily led to talk in this Style, in Conſequence of his firſt Principle, that God decreed Evil; ſince whatever God decrees muſt certainly be for the beſt; and thus having

having ſet out upon an Error of the Schools, he runs himſelf into others, as flagrant and enormous.

With Regard to a World of Good and Evil, thus much we may venture to affirm, that it is better than no World at all; we think ourſelves ſafe as to this Point, ſince, if it had not been ſo, the preſent World would have been immediately annihilated on the Entrance of Evil. But we cannot by any Means be perſuaded to believe, that Evil renders the World more perfect and excellent, and therefore for this Purpoſe

poſe was deſigned before-hand; as to this latter Fact, we are ſufficiently convinced of its Falſity, from a View of the State of Man before the Fall, and from all the ſubſequent Meaſures of divine Goodneſs to ſecure us againſt Evil.

And as to the former, that the World is more excellent on Account of Evils, we think it a Contradiction to ſay ſo. For Evils are certainly Stains and Blemiſhes in the Works of God, Diſorders and Infelicities in living Creatures, and therefore 'tis juſt as abſurd to call them Perfections, as it is to

call Darkneſs Light, and Miſery Happineſs.

Hence, concerning the Plan which God is ſuppoſed to have formed, with Regard to this Syſtem, we give our Judgment in this Manner. We believe, that the End which God propoſed to himſelf, in the Production of intelligent Creatures, and of all other Beings, ſo far as their Natures admit of it, was their Happineſs, and his Glory. There was a certain Series of Means which he foreſaw was neceſſary for accompliſhing theſe Ends.

Relatively

Relatively to moral Beings, he only gave Directions, ſhewed them the Steps they were to take, and the Rules they were to obſerve, in order to ſecure their Happineſs; but whether they would pay a due Deference, and proper Attention to them or no, was Matter of their own free Choice and unconſtrained Determinations. They were entirely at Liberty to diſregard his Injunctions, and deviate from the Line of Life, and Path of Duty, which he had drawn out for them. He found Reſources in his own infinite Perfections, ſuppoſing the worſt to happen, wherewithal

to remedy and obviate the ſad Event, to recover revolting Spirits under every Species of Degeneracy, and reſtore the whole Frame of fallen Nature to its original Beauty, and primitive Elegance. He found, that the Permiſſion of Phyſical Evil, was the propereſt Expedient on this Account, that Sin would not fail one Time or other, to be vanquiſhed by Pains, and Sufferings, after which Event, both of them ſhould be finally extinguiſhed, and ceaſe for ever. Such we humbly ſuppoſe, is the great Plan of Providence, a Plan in our poor Opinions, much more worthy

worthy of him, than that of an inevitable Series which deſtroys all Freedom, and eſtabliſhes an univerſal Fatality in Nature.

We next examine the Doctrine of ſome Moderns, touching the Riſe of Phyſical Evil, it is briefly this, that Matter and Evil are inſeparable, or where Matter is concerned, there muſt be Evils, even the divine Power of God is not able to prevent it.

This Opinion of the inſeparable Union of Matter and Evil, is buil only upon ſuch Inſtances and Ob-

ſervations, as Matter in its preſent Situation, and under its preſent Laws and Diſpoſitions furniſhes. We obſerve that Matter, under all its Forms, is paſſive and diviſible. We ſee many Parcels of it poſſeſſed of different Modes and Qualities; that ſome are rough, ſome are ſmooth, ſome hard, ſome ſoft, ſome ſweet, ſome bitter, ſome acid, and others ſaline. We find that ſuch Parcels of Matter, thus differently figured and qualified, will frequently fall foul upon, and interfere with each other, and when this happens to be the Caſe, there muſt be ſome little Diſorder and Confuſion

Confuſion in the Conſequence. To this Cauſe we aſcribe Storms in the Air, and Pains in the Bodies of Animals.

This to be ſure is the preſent State of Things, but we deny that it has always been ſo from the Beginning. We preſume, that the Diſorders here mentioned, are only incidental Phænomena, foreign to the original Conſtitution of the World, which was infinitely more regular and bleſſed. We conceive that when Man fell, the World fell too, and that all the Evils it now abounds with, are

the Effects of his Fall, intended to fit it for a Set of depraved Beings, who no longer deserved a happier World. These Facts will receive Confirmation from a View of the Inconsistencies which evidently cleave to the contrary Doctrine. The Doctrine that Evil and Matter are inseparable, will be found to combat the Reason and Fitness of Things, to impeach Scripture, and to invalidate Facts, in the Truth of which we are infinitely interested.

In the first Place, the Doctrine that Evil flows necessarily from Matter,

Matter, or attends it in all the Conditions of Creatures which have any Concern with it, ſuppoſes Miſery to enter into the State of Virtue and Innocence. It evidently teaches, that Man, and other Creatures, were a Prey to Sufferings in the firſt Moments of their Exiſtence, before any Crime was committed, or Guilt contracted. It ſets aſide the Notion of a Paradiſe, as of a Place of pure Happineſs, and unmixed Delights, by making it liable, as the Earth now is, to Storms, Plagues, Famines, and other ſuch dreadful Calamities. Now I wonder if this

this is not to combat Reaſon, and the fitneſs of Things, and to impeach the Scriptures, and the Goodneſs of God.

Moreover, this Doctrine ſets Bounds and Limits to the Power of God, and makes him a weak and impotent Being. It repreſents him as unable to protect Innocence, and ſecure it from Evil, to form a ſerene World, which ſhall be bleſſed with every Good, and in any View or Situation of Matter, to beatify Spirits united with it.

Further, this Doctrine places human

human Beings originally in ſuch a State, as is ſufficient of itſelf to ruin their Innocence, and force them into all the Follies of moral Evil. We ſee how difficult a Matter it is, even now, for People to bear up under Sufferings, to endure the Diſorders of Nature with any tolerable Degree of Patience, convinced as they are, of their own Demerits, and the fitneſs of ſuch Diſpenſations, and how then can you ſuppoſe a Being, conſcious of its Innocence, to have Reſolution to preſerve its Temper, under a Senſe of ſo many undeſerved Plagues, and unrighteous Miſe-

ries,

ries, would not ſuch a Being be apt to repine, to queſtion the Perfections of the ſupreme God, and mutter Complaints againſt him? Would he not be tempted to diſown his Authority, and to ſeek to make himſelf happy in his own Projects and Devices?

Further, this Doctrine attacks other Paſſages of the ſacred Writings. Death, the moſt formidable of all natural Evils, is there aſſerted to proceed from Sin. Thus Saint Paul ſays, Death entered by Sin. And the Author of the Apocryphal Book of the Wiſdom

of

of Solomon, ſpeaks thus, "God did not make Death, neither has he Pleaſure in the Deſtruction of the Living; for he created all Things that they might have their Being. But wicked Men by their Works and Words, called Death unto them." From which Expreſſions we conclude, that if there had been no Sin, there had been no ſuch Thing as Death. But the Doctrine of an inſeparable Union of Matter and Evil, ſhews the quite Contrary; we are taught from hence, that this, and all other natural Evils, were inevitable from the Beginning; that Man

muſt

muſt have felt Pain, been Sick and died, whether he had ſinned or no, and thus it overthrows ſome of the plaineſt Facts of Scripture.

Laſtly, this Doctrine of the inſeparable Union of Matter and Evil, denies the happy Conſequences of the Reſurrection, by furniſhing an Expectation of Pain and Uneaſineſs, in a future World. It is one of the fundamental Points of our Religion, that human Bodies are to riſe again, and become animated with the ſelf-ſame Souls, which were heretofore in this Life united to them; and the Com-

forts

forts ariſing from this Article are, that neither Death, nor Pain, nor Sickneſs, nor Injury, ſhall Attack thoſe of good Men any more; but, that they ſhall continue in an unchangeable Perfection of Health and Strength, and an everlaſting Fullneſs of Bloom and Vigour. But if the Opinion, that where-ever Matter is concerned, there muſt be Evils is allowed, we are all in the Wrong as to theſe Facts, we ſhall be ſubject to ſome Degree of Bodily-ſuffering, even in a future World, and the Regions of Bliſs. For though our Bodies are to be mightily changed at the Day of Reſurrection,

Reſurrection, yet they will ſtill have the Nature of Matter, and muſt conſequently be liable to Evils, if Matter and Evil are inſeparable. Now, becauſe ſo many Inconſiſtencies evidently cleave to the Doctrine in Queſtion, it is therefore to be diſclaimed, the Notion that Pain and Death are foreign Accidents, is confirmed, and the Origin of Evil, as will more largely appear by and by, is beſt accounted for in the fourth Opinion.

This fourth Opinion is, that natural Evil begun in the Sin of Creatures. And this is an Opinion

to

to be received, not only becauſe it ſets the divine Goodneſs clear of all Imputations, which neither of the preceeding Opinions does, but becauſe it is agreeable to Scripture and Reaſon, and furniſhes Matter for many uſeful Reflexions, and intereſting Obſervations.

The Opinion, that natural Evil begun in the Fall, ſets the divine Goodneſs clear of all Imputations. We prove both the Truth of this Opinion, and what is declared of it thus. Man was either expoſed to the Attacks of natural Evil before the Fall, or he was not. If

he was, then he ſuffered as an innocent Creature; and God muſt be either impotent, unjuſt, or cruel, not to prevent it; but ſince it is impoſſible that God ſhould be either impotent, unjuſt, or cruel, it is therefore impoſſible that Man ſhould be expoſed to the Attacks of natural Evil before the Fall; and if he was not thus expoſed to Pains and Diſeaſes, antecedent to this Event, then it is clear, that theſe entered only when this happened; that the Evils of Life are the Conſequences of Vice, and can exiſt no where but in a fallen World, and amongſt ſinful Creatures.

Creatures. Moreover, if the Sin of Man which introduced theſe Calamities, was Voluntary, his Sufferings can be no Imputation on the divine Goodneſs. And if his Goodneſs is unimpeachable on this Account, his Juſtice, Wiſdom, Holineſs, and other Perfections muſt be ſo too.

The Opinion that natural Evil proceeds originally from Sin, is what the Scripture itſelf declares, and herein it ſpeaks according to Reaſon and the Nature of Things. We do not find from what we read in this ſacred Book, that Man was

ſenſible of any Evil at all before Sin entered; it appears on the contrary, that he was compleatly happy in the Enjoyment of all Pleaſures and Conveniences, but immediately on his doing that which he was forbidden to do, he knew that he was naked, he perceived that the Goodneſs of God had in Part deſerted him, and found he was fallen into Want and Weakneſs. This was the firſt Stroke and Feel of natural Evil, as Remorſe, and Fear of the divine Indignation, was of Sin, or moral Evil. And all this is what Reaſon acquieſces in, what is perfectly agreeable

agreeable to that Judgment which the Mind itſelf on a proper View and State of the Caſe would naturally form. Man was originally pure and upright, and walked in the Way of Truth with a perfect Heart, and whilſt he continued thus, the Scripture makes him happy in the Poſſeſſion of every Bliſs. And does not Reaſon conclude, that this was Right? Does it not appear juſt in the Eyes of all Men of Underſtanding, that Innocence ſhould be thus diſtinguiſhed, and that a Creature, whoſe whole Love and Affections were centered in God, ſhould want no

Manner of Thing that was good. This is certainly to treat Things according to their Relations and Natures, and if it is not agreeable to Reaſon to do ſo, nothing in the World is.

Man forfeits his Innocence, he Sins and departs from his God. In Conſequence of this Apoſtacy, he becomes weak, wanting, and unhappy, he falls a Prey to Miſery, Diſorder, and Death. Obſerve how agreeable all this is to Reaſon too. Reaſon, as well as Scripture, makes God the Foundation of human Happineſs, the only Source,

Source, Support, and Stay of it. Reaſon therefore, as well as Scripture, concludes, that in departing from God, Man certainly departs from his Happineſs, and involves himſelf in all the Ills and Miſeries which he now complains of. It concludes, in ſhort, that the Fall of Man is the true Point from which the natural Evils of this Life proceed.

This Doctrine may be of great Utility to Mankind.

Phyſical Evil, conſidered as the Effect of Sin, admoniſhes us to

keep a ſtrict Eye to Virtue, in all the Ways we purſue, for the attaining of preſent Good.

It is of great Uſe to bring us back to the Fear of God, and a Senſe of our Duty, when other Arguments perhaps have not the Power to do it.

Phyſical Evil, conſidered as an Effect of Sin, teaches us to keep a ſtrict Eye to Virtue, in all the Ways we purſue, for the attaining of preſent Good. In this Light we ſee Sin and Suffering, very cloſely connected; and therefore

fore if we desire to have less Misery in this World, to be the better secured against Evils of all Kinds, and to live with any tolerable Degree of Comfort and Satisfaction, 'tis evident that Virtue is the only Rule we have to go by.

The present is an unhappy State, and must if possible, be bettered; Misery, of some Kind or other, is to be found amongst Men of all Ranks and Degrees. The Poor have many pinching Hardships to struggle with, the middling Class of People are not satisfied, and they who are at the Top of all,

and

and ſeem to want nothing, have a thouſand Uneaſineſſes. There are Pains, Sickneſſes, &c. which none of three Conditions can Eſcape, they are the common Lot of all; Evils theſe, that are of Conſequence, and muſt be attended to. Thus the whole Race of human Beings is unhappy, and hence it is, that we are every Day employed in ſearching after Cures and Remedies for this mighty Grievance. Phyſical Evil is an univerſal Spring of Action, and almoſt all the Arts, Sciences, and Inventions amongſt Men, derive from this Source. We cannot ſit

down

down with Want and Wretchedneſs, and therefore are perpetually hunting after Ways and Means to extricate ourſelves.

And why is not our Succeſs greater? There does not appear after all, to be one Grain leſs of Miſery in the whole Creation; the Reaſon is obvious, we do not regard Virtue, in our Purſuits after Good, but Evil; and Evil, and Miſery are inſeparable. A Thouſand of our Wants are vicious, and iniquitouſly gratified. The poor Man wants ſomething, which his richer Neighbour poſſeſſes, and

impatient

impatient under the Senſe of it; he ſeizes on the Object by Fraud, Theft, or Violence. He heals perhaps a preſent Miſery by this Act of Injuſtice, but certainly creates himſelf others much greater, and more tremendous.

The Man of moderate Fortune, fancies the Man above him, is more bleſſed than himſelf. He ſees how much larger the Circle of his Enjoyments is, he is dazzled at the Proſpect, he wants to be on a Level with him, and is unhappy. He enters into Projects of enlarging his Circumſtances; his Pro-

jects

jects ill-form'd, are Abortive, and he is ruined by a fooliſh Ambition; or he ſtretches beyond his Meaſure, and is undone by a vicious Imitation.

The rich Man who is at the Top of all, and wants nothing, is imprudent enough to fancy Wants. He forms Ideas of Pleaſure in this or that irrational Purſuit or Attainment, in the Gratification of this or that ridiculous Paſſion, Senſe, or Appetite. The Ideas are indulged, and Deſire is kindled, Deſire increaſes, gives Torment and Inquietude, and muſt be appeaſed.

peaſed. He appeaſes the Deſire, and is ſtill uneaſy; he forms new Fancies of other Wants, and other Pleaſures, and thus unfixed by the Rules of Virtue to his proper Buſineſs, he is perpetually carried out, by ſilly Imaginations, and irregular Deſires, into all the Exceſſes of Folly, and makes himſelf as wretched as the pooreſt Man alive. His very Poſſeſſions, if his Heart is there, become the Source of a Thouſand nameleſs Ills, and Infelicities. There are Pains and Diſeaſes, which all the three Conditions are inevitably ſubject to, and theſe are infinitely

increaſed

increaſed by a froward Impatience, and a wicked Diſcontent. In ſhort, ſo long as we indulge Imaginations, againſt the Rules of Reaſon, ſeek to mend our States by vicious Schemes, and for immoral Purpoſes, are governed by the groſs Dictates of Senſe, and Paſſion, and kick againſt the Orders and Appointments of Providence, the Miſeries of Life will never be diminiſhed, they entered through Vice, and will infallibly cleave to it to the End of the World.

It is Virtue only, which can mend the Matter, that can make

the World better and happier. It is Virtue which inſpires Content, ſets proper Bounds to the Wants, and Deſires of human Nature, and gives a true Reliſh and ſubſtantial Pleaſure to every Enjoyment. It is by Virtue as the Mean that we are to hope for Succeſs in our Schemes and Projects, to be protected againſt Evil, brought to the Good we want, and ſecured in a State of Eaſe, and Tranquility. For by Virtue we can only expect to recommend ourſelves to the God of Virtue, in whoſe Hands, and at whoſe Diſpoſal, the Concerns of all Men are.

We

We may not always perhaps come at the End we aim at in the Uſe of virtuous Means; there are particular Reaſons why we ſhould not always be indulged; but then we have this Comfort, that there is no Remorſe, as with fruſtrated Vice, to aggravate the Diſappointment, there is no Miſery in the Conſequence; and when we ſucceed, the Pleaſure is ſublime, infinitely ſuperior to the higheſt Good of wicked Men. Hence it is plain, that natural Evil conſidered as the Effect of Sin, is a powerful Motive to the Practice of Virtue in every Concern of Life.

2dly, It is of Uſe to bring us back to the Fear of God, and a Senſe of our Duty, when other Arguments perhaps have not the Power to do it.

There are only two Motives by which Creatures fallen from God, and the Love of Order, have any Chance to be recovered. The one is, the Proſpect of Happineſs, in the Practice of Truth, and the other the Fear or Senſation of Miſery in the Purſuits of Error.

The Firſt is a noble Motive, and a glorious Argument, and works with

with great Power in the Souls of Men, corrupted and depraved as they are, though it is not every where able to ſecure them againſt the Flatteries of Senſe, and the tumultuous Hurries of prevalent and unruly Paſſions.

The Second is a more ignoble Cauſe of Action, whoſe Efficacy lies in the Horrors of Infelicity, or that invincible Dread which Souls univerſally entertain of it. After the Lapſe of Man, God foreſaw that the Beauties of Order, and the Lovelineſs of Truth, would not be ſufficient to keep him in

the Line of Duty, he therefore graciouſly tried to fix him to it, by ſubſtituting other Means for this Purpoſe; by ſuffering Miſery to attack him for his Follies, by embittering thoſe ſordid Enjoyments that draw him aſide, and by threatning a ſad Account of Woes and Sorrows, in Reverſion. This Argument, notwithſtanding its Qualifications, is of prodigious Uſe, it often affects the Soul where others fail, and ſaves Millions of Beings from Perdition.

Phyſical Evil, in the Light we here place it, is a moral Inſtrument

ment of Duty, a Conſideration that works powerfully to correct the Irregularities of Paſſion, ſubdue the Perverſeneſs of the Will, and purify the Underſtanding. Every Species of corporeal Pain we are ſubject to, is a Call to Reformation, a feeling Conviction of the Diſadvantages of Vice, demonſtrates the Neceſſity of judging uprightly, and acting wiſely and rationally, as the only Way to ſecure us from the Injuries of preſent as well as future Evil. In ſhort, we conſider it, under this View, as contributing to wean us from low and unlawful Gratifi-

cations, to divert us from Purſuits, which are attended with Vexation and Vanity, and as therefore perſuading us, in the moſt powerful Manner, to unite our Affections to him, who is perfect and permanent Goodneſs, and can make us happy in every Stage of our Exiſtence.

Hence, though Death is terrible, and Pain and Sickneſs ungrateful and tormenting, though we are ſhocked at the Thoughts of an Event which ſo ſoon determines our Exiſtence here, and complain of Ills which are ſcattered

tered through the Moments of the preſent Life, yet we are by no Means to look upon them as the Inflictions of a Being, who Delights to plague, and vex his Creatures, and ſee them unhappy; this would be a wicked Thought, and an unjuſt Judgment. On the contrary, theſe Strokes are to be conſidered as ſalutary Chaſtiſements, that carry the Marks of divine Benevolence. We are thus afflicted, that we may be made Sick of our Follies, recovered to Virtue, and ſaved in the Day of God's fierce Anger.

Phyſical Evil, in the Light we here place it, is an univerſal Motive. It becomes to Men of all Ranks and Stations, an Argument to diſſuade from Wickedneſs, and a powerful Incitement to Virtue, Piety, and the Fear of God. Every good Man confeſſes it with Humility and Reverence, and makes the proper Uſe of it. And there is no bad Man who entertains a different Opinion of it, that does not do himſelf inconceivable Damage. He cannot promiſe himſelf an abſolute Freedom and Exemption from Suffering, he ſees it connected with

Vice

Vice in a Thouſand Caſes; and if he has been encouraged to fancy that it does not derive from this Cauſe, is a Thing in which Providence has no Hand or Deſign, and what he may poſſibly eſcape, he looſes every Advantage which may be reaped from it, and is betrayed into certain Ruin, through his own Deluſions.

The Diſtribution of Evil, indeed appears ſomewhat ſingular. At preſent it may be our Lot to eſcape it, it may be the Caſe of our Friend and Neighbour to fall under the Laſhes of the Rod. This

ſeems

ſeems to ſhew as if Suffering was fortuitous. But let us wait awhile; we have not yet left the Stage; we have the Parts of other Days to act; and perhaps before theſe have run their Courſes, it may be our Turns to be chaſtiſed. God's Providence is over all his Works, and as he would rather that every Creature ſhould return and live, we may poſſibly in the Sequel be thus dealt by. It is indeed ſure to be our Caſe, if we harden our Faces againſt other Calls, and refuſe to return, on the repeated Application of gentler Methods; and who but a Fool will

will deny that ſuch Viſitations are graciouſly deſigned to admoniſh him.

This indeed ſeems to be the laſt Effort of divine Goodneſs to reduce us to Reaſon, and when all other Arguments fail. And doubtleſs it is a Mean, by which Millions of Souls have been reſcued from Perdition. It may perhaps, in Time, convince the moſt obſtinate Spirits of their Folly, and make them Sick of Rebellion, when, all Intelligences returning again to him that made them, Sin and Miſery ſhall be ſwallowed up

in

in Victory, in thoſe glorious Conqueſts which divine Goodneſs ſhall obtain over them, and ceaſe for ever. How adorable is that Mercy of God, which is employed in ſo many Ways to make his Creatures virtuous and happy!

We ſhould here have cloſed this Diſcourſe, but that we think we can offer ſomething on the Affair of the Diſtribution of Evil, that will help to regulate many People's Notions concerning it.

It is generally underſtood, that the Ills of this World are very unequally

unequally divided, and improperly proportioned. They are thought to be frequently inflicted where they are not due, and with-held where they ought to fall, to be dealt in greater Quantities to good, than bad Men, and ſometimes to both indiſcriminately, and alike. Such an apparent Diſpoſition may induce ſuperficial Obſervers to conclude, that Phyſical Evil has no more to do with Vice, than Virtue, is a ſtrange unaccountable Phænomenon, and moves in the preſent Sphere of human Beings, only as Chance and Accident direct it.

But

But Appearances are no Foundations for true Judgment, and here, as to the Point in Queſtion, we have only Appearances to go by. The true State of Things, upon a Knowledge of which we can be enabled to decide with Certainty, is intirely concealed from us. We are utterly unacquainted with the real Merits and Demerits of Creatures, and of the reſpective Meaſures and Degrees of them. The human Heart is impenetrable to us, and what lies there, by Conſequence inviſible. They, whom we eſteem righteous, may not be ſo, and ſuch as

deſerve

deſerve that Character, may have ſome Stains and Blemiſhes which offend a purer, and more piercing Sight. The temporary Eſcapes of wicked Men may be aſcribed to the Forbearance of God, who does not inſtantly puniſh, or they may diſcover ſome Signs of Reformation, hidden from us, but evident to him who is the Searcher of Hearts. Or laſtly, there may be a conſiderable Difference in Men as to their Senſe of Afflictions, and one may not feel half as much as another, whilſt they appear to us to ſuffer alike. All this ſufficiently demonſtrates how

unqualified

unqualified we are to give any Judgment as to Rectitude in the Diſtribution of Evil. There may, for ought we know, be great Propriety obſerved in this Matter; we are certain there muſt, as to all the Degrees of it, with which God is pleaſed to viſit us.

As to thoſe Evils which ſpring from the Actions of wicked Men, and under which the Virtuous frequently fall, we may think they are unjuſt and undeſerved; they may be ſo; People may thus ſuffer in Return for Kindneſſes; in endeavouring to ſerve the Cauſe of Piety,

Piety, or becauſe the only Fault they have is, to proſper, and do well in the World, all which is againſt Reaſon, and in this Senſe highly wrong. But what are we to do on ſuch Occaſions? Muſt Providence be blamed becauſe we are not protected? Is he to be expected to interfere, and limit the Powers of wicked Men; prevent their ill Deſigns, and defeat their malicious Purpoſes againſt us. I am afraid, we are not of Conſequence enough for this: It is only in ſpecial Caſes of Merit, or for ſome great Ends of Heaven, that Men are thus preſerved by divine

Interpoſitions. We live in a World where we are upon Trial, and where many Things muſt be permitted on that Score. Beſides, Man is an accountable Being, and therefore ſhould be left in general to the free Uſe and Exerciſe of his own Powers. Our Duty then, as to the Evils we ſuffer by Means of wicked Men, is, to think after this Manner. God permits them to plague and torment us. Whatever he permits, it is right it ſhould be permitted. He has made Man a free Agent, and therefore Man has a Power to do hurt. But there is a Time appointed, when the

the Uſe he has made of his Liberty, ſhall be enquired into, when he ſhall have his due Puniſhment, for proſtituting it, to the Purpoſes of Injury and Violence, and when they who ſuffered from it, ſhall be properly rewarded. Upon theſe Conſiderations, is a Man to ſtrengthen himſelf; maintain his Faith, and preſerve his Virtue, under the Spite and Cruelty of wicked Men.

Laſtly, we ſee many good Perſons ſtruggling with the Hardſhips of Poverty and Want; and for all the honeſt Pains they take, are

but juſt able to get neceſſary Conveniences, ſometimes not theſe, and can never emerge into Plenty, and Affluence. Others we ſee who have all Things in Abundance; ſome are born to them, and ſome arrive at them, in a Courſe of ſucceſsful Buſineſs, and by a Train of lucky Incidents, many of whom are perhaps wicked, and undeſerving. Here alſo, Things appear to be wrong, unequal, unfit. But another State rectifies theſe apparent Improprieties, the good Man ſees he ſhall be dealt with there, in a Way that he ſhall deſerve.

deſerve. This is a great Support to him at preſent.

Beſides, he would do well to think after ſome ſuch Manner as this. There is a God. This God is a Being of infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs. He has placed me in a low State in this World. If I repine, I queſtion his Perfections; I doubt whether he is a wiſe and good Being; and ſo do him, as well as myſelf, much Injuſtice. I had therefore beſt acquieſce in the Condition to which I am appointed, and do it chearfully and thankfully. I ſee

others it is true, mounted much higher in the World, and ſeemingly happier in the Enjoyment of it's good Things. But this may be all Deluſion, they may be haunted with Anxieties that embitter their Pleaſures, and expoſed to Temptations, that perpetually endanger their Virtue; from all which, my Condition exempts me; ſo that in Point of real Enjoyment, we may be, all Things conſidered, pretty near upon a Level. In Point of Intereſt in Futurity, the Advantage, if I am content, may be on my Side.

In

In ſhort, whatever Evils we are ſubject to here, we have but little Power to judge of the Propriety, or unfitneſs of them. We can decide with no abſolute Certainty, 'till we come to ſee into the whole Deſign, and Contexture of Things. Only it appears pretty plain, that our moral Defects are the Grounds of all our Sufferings, and that the grand Deſign of the Permiſſion of natural Evil, is to deter us from Sin, and excite us to the Practice of Piety and Virtue.

But a Queſtion, and that of

ſome Importance, throws itſelf in our Way here to be diſcuſſed. It is this, How does the Opinion that Pains and Diſeaſes entered into the World through Sin, account for the ſuffering State of Brute Animals? Brutes are incapable of committing Sin, and if natural Miſery derives only from this Source, how comes it to paſs then, that they are ſo univerſally ſubject to it!

We cannot perhaps, reply to this Queſtion, by any Argument that will carry Conviction; and yet, if a ſimularity of Effects ſup-

poſes

poſes the ſame Cauſe, or if an exact Coincidence of Caſes is any juſt Ground for a Parity of Reaſoning upon them, we ſhall go pretty near to prove, that the Sufferings of Brute Animals are properly enough accounted for in the pre-aſſigned Cauſe of Phyſical Evil.

Now Brutes, as well as Men, are ſubject to the ſame Sorts of Pains, and Diſeaſes; ſo far their Caſes coincide; in all general Deſolations, they have ſuffered together, in this they conform. They ſuffered with Man the In-

juries

juries of the Fall. They have periſhed with him in Deluges, in Conflagrations, in Famines, in Peſtilences, in Deſtructions of the Sword; in ſhort, in all capital Calamities they have had their Share, as well as Man. Now, if there is any Reaſon to believe, that ſuch Evils are of God's Appointment, and occaſioned by Sin, muſt not Brutes then in ſome Reſpect or other, be ſuppoſed to be faulty? We do not pretend to ſay, or even to inſinuate, that they are capable of moral Rules, and become criminal after the Manner of Men; but we alledge, that

they

they muſt have ſome Kind of Demerit, they muſt have contracted Defilements, in ſome Way or other. If we cannot ſhew how this is, it is only an Inſtance amongſt many others of our Ignorance. The Facts inſiſted on, are deducible from the preceeding Caſes, and the Juſtice of God. God cannot puniſh his Creatures without a Cauſe, and this Cauſe muſt be guilt or Demerit of ſome Kind or other. Infinite Juſtice neceſſarily ſuppoſes it.

We leave this Matter to reſt here, and proceed to ſhew, that

as

as Brute Animals have attended Man, in all great, and capital Calamities, they will alſo attend him in his final Deliverance, be reſtored when he is reſtored, and have a Place in thoſe happy Regions, where Nature ſhall re-aſſume the Splendor, and Elegance of her priſtine Forms, the eternal God appear as he is, and every Thing be Repreſentative of him. The Manner in which we deſign to do this is, by Propoſitions, the Propoſitions will be illuſtrated with proper Scholia or Arguments, and ſuch Concluſions deduced,

duced, as thoſe Arguments are conceived to ſuggeſt.

As we ſhall make Uſe of Scripture, and the Opinions of the Ancients, in the Courſe of the following Eſſay, we ſhall give theſe Authorities a diſtinct Conſideration, and in the firſt Place, we ſhall examine whether any Paſſages occur in them, which fairly countenance the Notion of a future Exiſtence of Brutes, and lay them before the Reader.

We were prevailed upon to adopt this Method, not only becauſe

cauſe divine Authorities are the higheſt of all others, and the Sentiments of the Fathers are venerable; but for the Purpoſes of confirming our own Judgments, which are the laſt in order offered, and reconciling the Minds of others, to a Point that appears ſo ſingular. For if a final Reſtoration of Brutes, can be ſhewn to be the Senſe of Scripture, and the Ancients, it will be a mighty Sanction to thoſe Obſervations, deduced on other Principles; it will render what we have to offer from Reaſon upon this Subject, and from the Natures of Things, ſomewhat more

more ſubſtantial than Conjecture, and as having an Air of Truth at leaſt, not altogether to be diſregarded.

The End of Vol. I.

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